



GOVERNANCE (Updated September 2022)



Governance within Trust in Learning (Academies)

Summary

Trust in Learning (Academies) (TiLA) is the legal entity responsible for the governance of all academies and schools within the Trust. TiLA shall have regard to any guidance as to the governance of academies that the Secretary of State may publish.

The object of the Trust is to advance for the public benefit education, by establishing, maintaining, managing and developing schools which provide high quality education to students from all backgrounds by offering a broad curriculum and fostering collaboration across the Trust family of schools, other schools, education establishments and the wider community.

TiLA has the following goals and aspirations to:

- create exceptional and distinctive community schools that deliver outstanding education and learning
- be an organisation that supports and challenges school leadership in equal measure
- be a distinctive organisation that delivers a balance between school autonomy and collective responsibility and improvement
- trust schools and their leaders, but to hold them to account within an agreed framework
- be a fully inclusive family of schools
- work with schools with likeminded values
- fully understand and then overcome issues of disadvantage which pervade the education system

In order to deliver such outcomes TiLA believes that the following values and qualities will underpin our work:

- Trust, openness, honesty, accountability, inclusivity, a focus upon overcoming disadvantage; selflessness, collaboration, collective responsibility, respect, working in partnership, challenge, leadership, contextual understanding and high expectations for all
- Balancing high levels of accountability with empowerment for senior Trust staff

In all that we do, at whatever level throughout the organisation, we uphold the Nolan Principles.

Our guiding principles when working with schools and academies is to:

1. Trust in Learning
2. Trust in Leadership
3. Trust in Local Involvement

To deliver these principles within a culture that fully understands the importance of success for our communities and for our children and therefore the necessity for appropriate challenge and accountability.

The Members

There are five members of Trust in Learning (Academies). Of these five, one member also sits on the Board of Directors (or trustees). This ensures that there is real separation between members and the Board thus allowing impartial views to be expressed.

The members meet three times a year and on each occasion their agenda is directed by our three guiding principles: learning, leadership and local involvement. Their key responsibilities include appointing the directors (trustees) and holding them to account for the successful governance of the Trust. In addition to appointing directors (trustees), according to the Trust's Articles of Association, they also have the power remove serving directors (trustees).

Board of Directors (Trustees)

The Board of Directors (the Board) is responsible for the effective operation of the Trust and each academy or school. It provides ongoing challenge and support to the executive team and to local governance activity (in whatever form this takes). The Board meets six times per year plus any extraordinary meetings.

The Board fulfils the following key roles through delegation of its powers to the Chief Executive:

- Ensures safety, health and compliance across all Trust schools and activities
- Ensures the Board is appropriately informed about Trust performance, including financial performance
- Ensures that the goals, aspirations, guiding principles, culture and objectives are applied consistently.

The manner by which the Board operates is laid down by the Articles of Association and comprises:

- Directors appointed by the Sponsor (Trust in Learning)
- Chairman of the Board at the time
- Chief Executive of the Trust at the time
- Directors who are co-opted
- Directors who have a specific responsibility for working with a specific school, for example chair of a School Improvement Board

Key Responsibilities:

- Ensure the quality of the educational provision at each school/academy
- Establish and oversee the strategic direction of each academy and challenge and monitor its performance
- Acting as the employer of all staff
- Ensure compliance with all the relevant legislation, including (but not limited to) that relating to the health and safety of its employees, students and visitors

- Challenge and monitor the financial governance and strategy of the Trust through the delegation of powers to its
- Ensure regular effective communication with schools and local governance activity, via the Chair and Chief Executive
- Approve the Trust's Admissions Policy
- Consider proposals for growth of the Trust or change of strategic direction

Aspects of these responsibilities may be delegated to the Chief Executive or individual School Improvement Boards/Local Governing Bodies, with the day-to-day running of each academy. For example, the Board will:

- Ensure clarity of roles for School Improvement Boards/Local Governing Bodies and that there is effective governance at individual school/academy level
- Ensure the Chief Executive has provided support and assistance for School Improvement Boards/Local Governing Bodies and their Chairs to fulfil their delegated duties as set out in this document
- Via the Chair of the Board, undertake performance management of the Chief Executive
- Ensure clarity of roles and accountability between the Board, the Chief Executive, Headteachers/Principals, Chairs of School Improvement Boards/Local Governing Bodies and those colleagues at the local (school) level engaged in governance activities.
- Approve the Trust's Pay and Performance Policy and devolve operational aspects to the Chief Executive
- Ensure all finances and senior pay awards are effectively managed by the Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Operations through the Finance (and Remuneration) Committees.

Evidence of the effectiveness of the Board will be provided by:

- Output from the annual self-assessment audit looking at:
 - Setting direction
 - Providing scrutiny
 - Administering stewardship
 - Providing support
- Stretch of the Chief Executive
- Achievement and attainment at each school/academy
- Challenging before approving the targets set for each school/academy
- Rapid and demonstrable progress for pupils/students
- Reduction in the gap between performance of different groups of pupils/students and the average
- Rigorous, data-oriented assessment of teaching quality and pupil/student progress
- High standards of behaviour, good attendance and a safe environment in each school/academy
- A strong Trust-wide culture of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Universally high expectations of staff as well as pupils/students
- Local governance activity acting as a driving force for improvement regularly checking their own effectiveness
- Positive parent/carer and pupil/student feedback
- Collection of data indicating school/academies regarded as an asset within their communities.

Standing Committees of the Board

Finance and Operations Committee (including the Audit Committee) (meets six times per year)

The purpose of the committee is to exercise the powers and duties of the Board in respect of the financial administration of the Trust, except for those items specifically reserved for the Board and those delegated to the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance and Operations and other staff. The committee coordinates the Board's financial and operational responsibilities by recommending policy and strategy to the Board, interpreting it for staff and monitoring its implementation. It also oversees and agrees the annual budget proposed by each school locally, including levels of staffing.

Quality of Education Committee (meets four times per year)

The purpose of the committee is to monitor, evaluate and review school/academy performance and the quality of provision. It will focus upon the key Ofsted categories. Learning outcomes and progress as well as supporting the development of classroom practice and inter school collaboration and support are key responsibilities. The committee is comprised of Directors, the Chief Executive, Director of School Improvement and the Headteachers/Principals from each school/academy.

The committee will review and respond to the local school work of the School Improvement Boards or the local governing body.

Local Governance Activity (1)

School Improvement Boards (meets three times per year)

The remit of the Board is to oversee improvement at the school level by both challenging and supporting the Headteacher/Principal. The board follows up lines of enquiry from the Chief Executive's Core Visit programme to review progress at the school level. Findings are then shared and discussed at the Quality of Education Committee meetings. The Board is comprised of a Chair, who is a Director, another Director from the Quality of Education Committee, the Director of School Improvement and the Headteacher/Principal of the school. The Board will be properly supported by a qualified clerk.

In fulfilling its responsibilities, the School Improvement Boards (SIB) will focus upon:

- Intent: what is the school looking to achieve? This provides each board with a baseline for their analysis and evaluation and will link to each school's SIP/SDP
- Implementation: the quality of teaching (pedagogy); provision and how the school is looking to develop its people (CPD); together with pupil/student engagement
- Impact: a focus upon progression and attainment

In essence the SIB will focus on the learner, their achievements, progress and experiences at school. At the heart of this will be a focus upon learning and teaching, leadership, the development of a learning culture, well-being of students and staff, equity and inclusion.

Note: for those schools who have a School Improvement Board they will also be required to have in place a **Community and Parent advisory Group**

Local Governance Activity (2)

Local Governing Bodies

The Local Governing Bodies are committees of the Board. It is the role of the Local Governing Bodies to support and strengthen their Headteacher's/Principal's leadership through robust challenge; to work via the Chair of the school/academy to hold the Headteacher/Principal accountable for the performance of students and staff.

The objectives of Local Governing Bodies are to be accountable to the Chief Executive and the Board for ensuring:

- local processes are in place and are adequate for safety, health and compliance with statutory requirements – including financial
- the Board are informed through agreed mechanisms
- that the goals, aspirations, guiding principles, culture and objectives are features of the school/academy
- attainment and progress for children and young people remains the core purpose and objective of the school/academy
- with the Headteacher/Principal that the highest standards of student behaviour are achieved and sustained

Composition:

- The LGB will be a minimum of nine and a maximum of 13
- The Chair will be appointed by the Trust in Learning (Academies) Board on recommendation from the LGB
- The maximum terms for the Chair to sit will be two cycles (of four years)
- The Headteacher will be a member of the LGB
- There will be at least one other staff local governor
- The maximum term for local governors is four years. However, local governors may be reappointed when their term comes to an end as long as the skills of the people being reappointed are applicable to the needs of the school
- The LGB will appoint a qualified clerk

Thus the Local Governing Body can select governors most suited to delivering their responsibilities rather than meeting any particular category requirement.

Each LGB has the following delegated functions:

- Building an understanding of how the school is led and managed
- Challenging and supporting the Headteacher in relation to pupil progress and attainment
- Monitoring whether the school is:
 - Working within agreed policies
 - Is meeting the agreed targets
 - Managing its finances well
- Engaging with stakeholders

- Reporting to the board

The key function and expectation of each LGB is to focus its work primarily upon school improvement. It is not the expectation, nor the delegated function of the LGB, to be involved in the operational running of the school apart from those areas directly linked to financial scrutiny and oversight as well as any mandatory responsibilities delegated down from the Board.

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive is appointed by the members in consultation with the Board to fulfil the following delegated objectives.

- Ensures safety, health and compliance across all Trust schools and activities
- Ensures the Board is appropriately informed about Trust performance, including financial performance
- Ensures that the goals, aspirations, guiding principles, culture and objectives are applied consistently
- Setting and communicating strategy for the Trust
- Challenging and supporting schools/academies in relation to the Trust's core purpose

Key Responsibilities:

Effective Management of Budgets

The Chief Executive, in their position as Accounting Officer (AO), will be accountable for budgetary planning, internal control and delivery and will ensure effective use of resources to achieve value for money through centralisation and sharing where appropriate across the Trust, within sub-groups of academies and at individual academy level. The Chief Executive will be assisted by the Director of Finance and Operations and Headteachers/Principals in this. The Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Operations will report regularly to the Finance and Audit Committee as well as the Board.

Performance and Standards

The Chief Executive will be accountable to the Board for:

- Providing effective performance management of Headteacher/Principals, and all senior central staff as appropriate
- Standards in every Trust school/academy
- Ensuring robust quality assurance processes are in place at each school/academy and that local governance activity/duty is carried out effectively
- Defining expectations and operating rigorous data-based progress assessment
- Ensuring tactical capacity for support is in place either using shared or central resources
- Ensuring robust management reporting is in place at each school/academy
- Preparing and presenting reports to the Board

People

The Chief Executive will be central to the appointment of Headteachers/Principals on behalf of the Board and in all such appointments the CEO will ensure local/school involvement and engagement. The Board, via the Chief Executive, will have the final say in these appointments. The appointment of the Director

of Finance and Operations and the Director of HR will involve the Chief Executive fully, but this post is appointed directly by the Board. The Chief Executive provides regular updates on performance targets for all Headteachers/Principals. The Chief Executive is accountable to the Board for:

- Ensuring appropriate numbers, qualification and skills of staff in each school/academy
- Ensuring appropriate continuous professional development and talent management is in place
- Ensuring that pay is appropriately linked to performance
- Intervening at individual school/academy level where necessary
- Appointments processes and procedures, including safeguarding
- Managing Headteachers/Principals and senior central team staff as direct reports

Appointment and Support of all involved in Trust Governance Activity

Appointments are undertaken following a skills audit ensuring there is a close match between Trust/School need to the individual strengths and experiences of the applicant. An induction programme will support Directors and will be organised by Clare Anderson (Company Secretary) see Appendix 1. For those involved in local governing bodies the induction of local governors will be the responsibility of the LGB, but further support and guidance will be provided by the Company Secretary.

Each governance group will be subject to annual review and appropriate training and support provided following such reviews. A separate induction paper is available to Directors.

Appendix 1

Director/Trustee Induction

1. Processes, Systems and Ways of Working

A meeting will be held with the Company Secretary to familiarise new directors and/or members in terms of how the Trust operates. This will include access to Governor Hub and Microsoft Teams. The Company Secretary will provide key documentation for new members/directors to read:-

- TiLA Strategic Plan for Improvement
- TiLA Operational Model
- TiLA Principles
- TiLA Curriculum Framework
- TiLA School Improvement Model
- TiLA Shared Language of Pedagogy

2. Familiarisation meetings will be organised with the CEO, Director of Finance and Operations, the Director of HR and Communications together with the chair of any committee the new director will be asked to serve on.

3. Training and Development – Mandatory training will take place for safeguarding and this will be revisited annually in addition throughout the year training and development sessions will be incorporated within key Board Meetings and bespoke/ individual training provided following our annual skills audit.

4. Buddy/Mentor – each new director will be provided with a buddy/mentor who can provide informal advice and guidance on being a member/director.

The above programme of support and induction will be organised between the new director and the Company Secretary.